

Message Text

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SUBJECT: UNITED SEAMEN'S SERVICE CLUB, NAPLES

REF: STATE 245075

EMBASSY-CONGEN TELCON OCT 10 AND 15

1. BASED ON TELCON WITH ROME CONGEN REDDEN OCTOBER 10, I PHONED NAPLES UNITED SEAMEN'S SERVICE TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE 30-DAY EVICTION NOTICE CLUB HAD RECEIVED DUE TO THE CITY'S PLAN TO USE THE PREMISES AS A FIRE STATION. I WAS ADVISED THAT THE CLUB'S PRESIDENT MRS. MONTI, WHO RESIDES IN ROME, WAS COMING TO NAPLES AND WOULD BE AVAILABLE AT THE CLUB TO SEE ME LATER IN THE DAY. IN MY DISCUSSION WITH MRS. MONTI SHE INFORMED ME THAT BOTH SECRETARY KISSINGER AND AMBASSADOR VOLPE WOULD BE INTERCEDING TO OBTAIN A REVOCATION OF THE

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EVICTION NOTICE. NEVERTHELESS SHE ACCEPTED MY SUGGESTION THAT WE MEET AND EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF LOCATING ALTERNATE QUARTERS IN THE PORT AREA AS THE PREFECT'S OFFICE HAD URGED THE CLUB TO DO. WHEN WE MET MRS. MONTI SAID SHE HAD BEEN FACED WITH THE THREAT OF EVICTION SOME YEARS AGO AND MENTIONED THAT THERE WAS A BUILDING WITHIN THE PORT AREA WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED. SHE STATED HOWEVER THAT SHE PREFERRED NOT TO RELOCATE INTO THE PORT AREA.

2. WE VISITED THE BUILDING IN QUESTION WHICH IN MY JUDGMENT WAS WELL APPOINTED AND IN FACT APPEARED TO BE A MUCH BETTER FACILITY THAN THE EXISTING QUARTERS. SINCE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE USS WAS COMING TO NAPLES FROM NEW YORK ON THE 14TH, WE AGREED TO AWAIT HIS ARRIVAL AND TO DISCUSS THE MATTER FURTHER WITH HIM AND USS'S AMERICAN LAWYER WHO WAS ACCOMPANYING HIM.

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3. AT THE MEETING IN MY OFFICE ON THE 14TH, THE USS REPS WERE

STRONGLY AGAINST A MOVE INTO THE PORT AREA AND FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES RULED THIS POSSIBILITY OUT ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD TAKE AT LEAST ONE YEAR TO EFFECT A MOVE TO THE BUILDING IN QUESTION OR OTHER BUILDING IN THE PORT AREA. THE USS REPS HIGHLIGHTED THE FACT THAT THEY HAD SCORES OF INFLUENTIAL SUPPORTERS IN ITALY AND THE US, AND THESE WOULD BE USED IN THEIR FIGHT AGAINST A MOVE. AS

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HONORARY CHAIRMAN OF THE LOCAL USS SPONSORS' COMMITTEE I STRESSED THE URGENCY OF AN ALL OUT EFFORT TO SEARCH FOR ALTERNATE QUARTERS, INCLUDING LOCATIONS IN THE PORT AREA SINCE NO LOGICAL ARGUMENTS WERE OFFERED AGAINST THIS. MR. SETTE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD BE TRAVELING TO EGYPT TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF SETTING UP A CLUB THERE BUT PROMISED THAT IN THE MEANTIME HE AND OTHER USS MEMBERS WOULD MAKE A DETERMINED EFFORT TO FIND ALTERNATE QUARTERS. I ASSURED THEM OF MY INTEREST IN ASSISTING THEM IN RESOLVING THE PROBLEM, INCLUDING MY WILLINGNESS TO APPROACH LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN AN EFFORT TO PERSUADE THEM TO ALLOW THE CLUB TO REMAIN AT ITS PRESENT LOCATION.

4. IT WAS SURPRISING AND DISCOURAGING TO LEARN FROM THE EMBASSY YESTERDAY THAT THE USS REPS ARE IN ROME AND HAVE MADE NO EFFORT TO SEARCH FOR NEW QUARTERS. I AM ALSO CHAGRINED TO LEARN FROM THE PREFETTURA THAT THE USS REPS (MRS. MONTI AND MR. SETTE) HAVE SUCCEEDED IN ANTAGONIZING THE PREFECT OF NAPLES. AS THE AMBASSADOR IS WELL AWARE THE PREFECT HAS BEEN A STAUNCH FRIEND OF OURS AND HIS SUPPORT IS INDISPENSABLE AT A TIME WHEN WE HAVE A COMMUNIST MAYOR AND LEFTIST CITY AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS.

5. THE ABOVE NOTWITHSTANDING, I WILL DO MY BEST TO SMOOTH THINGS

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OVER AND TO ASSIST THE USS AS MUCH AS I POSSIBLY CAN. COLANTONIO

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